



?? THE CLICHÉ QUIZ ??



1. Are you writing about someone you admire? Mom, Dad, Great Aunt Betsy?

NO



YES



To prevent this essay from slipping into generic terms, focus on one important moment in your relationship. One simple story will convey the depth of your experience. And remember, this is an essay about YOU, not the person you admire.

2. Are you writing about sports? Your baseball team's big win? Your tennis team's disappointing loss?

NO



YES



Scrap the same old sports story about the value of teamwork or the resilience of spirit. Instead, focus on how the skills you use on the field apply to other areas of your life. Or use the sport as a metaphor to explore a larger idea.

3. Are you writing about how your community service project changed your life? Or how you realized you love to help other people?

NO



YES



Exchange that overdone narrative for something genuine about you. What led you to get involved? What surprised you? What small detail stands out and reveals something about the person you are becoming?

4. Can you imagine someone else putting their name at the top of your essay?

NO



YES



If someone -ANYONE- could claim this essay as their own, it doesn't capture the essence of YOU. Make it yours by relaying anecdotes or memories that only you have.

5. Does your essay feel vague? Is it full of generalizations without much distinguishing detail?

NO



YES



Anchor down in specifics by recounting specific details from your life. Use all of your senses to recall events - sights, sounds, smells, etc. It will bring your stories to life.

**YOU'RE AWESOME!
SOUNDS LIKE YOUR
ESSAY IS OFF TO A
GREAT START!**

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COLLEGE ESSAY ACADEMY